

500 Tribal members to get Cover Oregon

HEALTH CARE continued from front page

by President Obama and ruled constitutional by the Supreme Court, debuted on Oct. 1 when Cover Oregon went online.

Cover Oregon, which is the state-run health exchange, allows residents who do not have health insurance through work or Medicare/Medicaid to search and compare plans and purchase a policy. Under the act's provisions, people can no longer be denied health insurance coverage for pre-existing conditions, people can receive federal subsidies to afford the premiums depending on their income level and insurance carriers are required to spend at least 80 percent of their premiums on care.

The site also features a specific link for Oregon Tribes and Tribal members to sign up for coverage.

For Grand Ronde Tribal members who do not have health insurance coverage through an employer or through Medicare, purchasing an individual health insurance policy through Cover Oregon will help the Tribe in that it will put another entity first in line to pay medical bills before the Tribe's self-funded Skookum coverage comes into play.

Meneley said about 500 Tribal members will need to get health insurance coverage through Cover Oregon. The national deadline for uninsured Americans to purchase health insurance coverage is Feb. 15, 2014, in order to avoid paying a penalty.

Former Tribal Assistant Executive Health Services Director Allyson Lacatsas, who still works part-time for the Tribe, said that Tribal members who are 65 and older and on Medicare or are younger than 65 who are on Medicare because of a disability are not affected by the new health care act.

In addition, Tribal members who have health coverage through an employer do not have to purchase an individual plan through Cover



Photo by Michelle Alaimo

Former Tribal Assistant Executive Health Services Director Allyson Lacatsas, middle, Loretta Meneley, left, Tribal Certified Applications Assistor, and Amber Yates, who does patient registration at the Grand Ronde Health & Wellness Clinic, talk about the Affordable Care Act and how it affects Tribal members during the General Council meeting held in the Tribal Community Center on Sunday, Oct. 6.

Oregon.

Meneley said that Tribal members who signed up for the Oregon Health Plan who were placed on the reservation list, which no longer exists, will have to go the Cover Oregon route as well.

"A lot of people qualify for it and don't realize that they do," Yates said. "It will save the Tribe a lot of money."

"If you do not have employer coverage or are not enrolled or eligible for Medicaid, it is important to remember that you are going to need to go through the steps with the marketplace," Lacatsas said. "Regardless if Tribal members live in Oregon or another state across the country, the other states will also have the same thing. They might not have a state-run exchange, which is what Cover Oregon is, but it will be a federal program and every state will have a marketplace."

Under the Affordable Care Act, Americans without health care coverage could start shopping for a policy on Oct. 1 and have until Dec. 15 in order for coverage to begin on Jan. 1, 2014.

sought healing. It is a practice that has been in place since time immemorial. These stones have been collected from the Tribe's ancestral homelands and represent our connection to them. You may select a healing stone and place it on the mound. By doing so may the offering provide the healing that you seek. Please honor our place of rest for those who have walked on and be respectful of this sacred area. No photographs are permitted and we ask that you do not remove any items."

Reibach said the Atudship site will be a permanent monument for Tribal members of all faiths.

The site will officially be used for the first time at 10 a.m. Friday, Nov. 22, during the 30th Restoration Ceremony for a healing ceremony.

In other action, Robert Wiggs won the \$100 door prize and Debi Anderson, Dorothy Leno and Carol Gleason won the \$50 door prizes. Necklaces created by Tribal Council member Jon A. George in the colors of Oregon State University and the University of Oregon also were raffled off.

The next General Council meeting will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 3, in the Tribal Community Center.

Tribal Council also presented a Pendleton blanket to former Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr., who recently concluded six years of service on council. ■

Tribal members with questions about the Affordable Care Act are encouraged to call Yates or Meneley at 503-879-1359 or check out www.coveroregon.com.

In other action, Tribal Land & Culture Department Manager Jan Looking Wolf Reibach explained the new Atudship site being created next to the Tribal Cemetery.

The site will be a place where Tribal members can place stones in an effort to promote healing.

A sign to be placed at the site says, "The Atudship serves as a place for healing as our ancestors before us

Tribal Council votes to disenroll another member

By Dean Rhodes

Smoke Signals editor

Tribal Council voted to disenroll a 14th member of the Tribe at its Oct. 9 meeting.

The most recent disenrollment states that the Tribal member was disenrolled "because he or she was enrolled in error and therefore does not meet the requirements for enrollment" as stated in the Tribal Constitution and Enrollment Ordinance.

In mid-August, Tribal Council voted to disenroll 13 Tribal members because they were dually enrolled in another Tribe, which is in violation of the Tribal Constitution. In early September, three of those disenrolled Tribal members were re-enrolled.

The current total of Tribal members who have been disenrolled and not re-admitted under current enrollment requirements stands at 11.

At the Oct. 6 General Council meeting, several Tribal members who recently received letters about possible disenrollment because of lineal descent issues testified about how they are descended from Chief Tumulth, who signed the 1855 Willamette Valley Treaty, but was later hung on the orders of Lt. Phil Sheridan and does not appear on any of the Tribe's historical enrollment rolls.

In other action, Tribal Council:

- Authorized the Land & Culture Department to execute hay license agreements with area farmers for the 2014 harvest season;
- Approved the Grand Ronde Tribal Housing Authority's submission of the 2014 Indian Housing Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Authorized participation in the "Identifying Our Needs: A Survey of Elders" health needs assessment;
- Established a bank account to track capital campaign fundraising for Chachalu, the Tribal museum;
- Approved the enrollment of one infant into the Tribe;
- Voted to support the Polk County public safety levy – Measure 27-109 – and allow use of the Tribe's name and logo in levy campaign materials;
- And appointed Tribal Council member June Sherer to the Spirit Mountain Community Fund Board of Trustees. ■



Photo by Siobhan Taylor

Tribal Council gifted former Tribal Council member Steve Bobb Sr. with a Pendleton blanket at the Oct. 6 General Council meeting in appreciation for his serving two terms on Tribal Council. Bobb served from 2007 through September of this year. Pictured with Bobb are, from left, Tribal Council Chair Reyn Leno, Tribal Council Vice Chair Jack Giffen Jr. and Tribal Council Secretary Toby McClary.